



SUDAN MORNING NEWS

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Darfur

- African Union Special Envoy to Sudan, Salim Ahmed Salim, and UN Representative to Sudan, Jan Eliasson, met yesterday with Senior Assistant to the President Mini Minawi and Presidential Advisor Dr. Magzoub Al Khalifa. Eliasson reportedly said that the Sudanese government is keen on resolving the Darfur crisis. "We hope that the security and humanitarian situations will improve on the ground. The international community eagerly anticipates the outcome of our current visit with respect to finding a final solution for the crisis in Darfur," Eliasson said. He further called on both Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) signatories and non-signatories to take the implementation of the agreement seriously. Furthermore, AMIS spokesman Nouredine Mezni said that Salim and Eliasson would announce their plan for a dialogue with DPA opponents upon completion of their consultations with the various parties in Khartoum and Darfur. (*Sudan Vision*)

African Peace and Security Council meetings

- The African Peace and Security Council concluded its sessions yesterday focusing on Chadian – Sudanese relations. The final communiqué has not been issued yet, but sources reveal that the Council will recommend sending a fact-finding mission to Sudan, Chad, and Central African Republic to investigate obstacles hindering the implementation of agreements signed between Chad and Sudan. The Council is also likely to press Sudan to expedite the peace process in Darfur and to call on the Chadian government to conduct dialogue with rebels. (*Al-Rai Al-Aam*)

Miscellaneous

- President Al-Bashir is expected to leave for France today to participate in the Franco-African summit, which opens in Cannes there on Thursday. (*Al-Rai Al-Aam*)

- Minister of Defense Abdel Rahim Hussein announced yesterday the formation of a joint force composed of members of the Sudan Armed Forces and Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) specialized in demining. The newly formed force will begin demining in March by operating along the Wau-Oeil-Babanosa railroad. (*Al-Sudani*)

- The SPLM is set to move its headquarters to Khartoum and to launch the campaign for the 2009 general elections this November, according to a report of the party's recent interim National Council meeting in Juba. (*The Citizen*)

Editorials and commentaries

- In the second of a two-part editorial, "Al-Sahafa" editor Adil Al-Baz argues that the "construction" of a U.S. military base in Africa (AFRICOM) serves two purposes: 1) it is part of a U.S. plan to combat terrorism in Africa; and 2) it will help secure African oil reserves given the instability of oil reserves in Iraq, Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Quote of the Day

"The National Congress Party knows the real killer of the Al-Nilein University student but wishes to mar the image of the SPLM." -- Deng Koj, SPLM media and cultural affairs secretary

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